

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MONROVIA 1992

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EWWT, IMCO, US, LI

SUBJECT: LIBERIAN CANDIDACY FOR MEMBERSHIP ON IMCO COUNCIL

DEPARTMENT FOR AF/W

REF: STATE 082875

1. I DO NOT CONCUR IN RESPONSE SET FORTH IN STATE 082875 TO GOL REQUEST FOR SUPPORT FOR LIBERIAN MEMBERSHIP ON IMCO COUNCIL. TO SAY ONLY THAT WE FAVOR LIBERIAN MEMBERSHIP "IN PRINCIPLE" MEANS THAT WE HAVE NOT YET MADE UP OUR MINDS. WORSE, THAT RESPONSE NOT ONLY REPRESENTS UNEXPLAINED RETREAT FROM OUR PREVIOUS POSITION OF ACTUAL SUPPORT, BUT ALSO CAN BE TAKEN TO IMPORT A THREAT THAT ULTIMATE USG SUPPORT WILL IN FACT DEPEND ON WHAT GOL DOES IN MEANTIME.

2. WHAT IS MEANING OF LANGUAGE "WE WOULD ANTICIPATE BEING ABLE TO SUPPORT LIBERIAN CANDIDACY," ETC.? OF COURSE WE WILL BE ABLE TO SUPPORT IT; THE QUESTION IS, ARE WE GOING TO? THAT IS WHAT GOL WANTS TO KNOW.

3. STATE 082875 STATES A CONTRADICTION IN TERMS: WE FAVOR LIBERIAN MEMBERSHIP IN PRINCIPLE, BUT FACTS THAT OTHER CANDIDACIES MIGHT COME FORWARD AND GOL MIGHT TURN OUT TO "FACE SERIOUS OPPOSITION" PERMIT INFERENCES THAT WE MIGHT FAVOR SOMEBODY ELSE AND ONLY BACK PROBABLE WINNERS ANYWAY. I FAIL TO SEE HOW THESE

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CONSIDERATIONS DO ANYTHING OTHER THAN CHANGE MEANING FROM "FAVOR

IN PRINCIPLE" TO "FAVOR MAYBE." TO REFER TO GENERAL POLICY NOT TO GIVE FIRM ADVANCE COMMITMENTS OF SUPPORT FOR ELECTION TO BODIES OF UN SPECIALIZED AGENCIES IS MERELY TO BEG THE QUESTION FROM GOL POINT OF VIEW. UPSHOT IS THAT I AM TO TELL GOL THAT, WHILE WE ARE SYMPATHETIC, WE DO NOT NOW SUPPORT LIBERIAN MEMBERSHIP, BUT IT MAY TURN OUT THAT WE WILL. MONROVIA 1703 POINTS OUT STERILITY OF THAT POSITION. IF ALSO MEANS THAT, WHILE WE PUT PRESSURE ON GOL TO SUPPORT US ON MATTERS IMPORTANT TO US BUT OF MARGINAL INTEREST TO IT, WE ARE NOT WILLING TO SUPPORT GOL ON MATTERS OF GREAT IMPORTANCE TO IT.

4. GOL'S FOREIGN MINISTER HAS FLATLY SAID HE DOUBTS THERE IS "SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP" BETWEEN US AND LIBERIA. THERE COULDN'T BE A CLEARER CASE THAN THIS IMCO COUNCIL MATTER IN WHICH TO PROVE HIM RIGHT AND DEMONSTRATE THAT LIBERIA GETS ONLY THE STANDARD TREATMENT. GOL WILL ALMOST CERTAINLY VIEW THIS CASE AS LITMUS PAPER TEST OF NATURE OF US-LIBERIA RELATIONSHIP. I AM NOT ARGUING FOR OR AGAINST SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP; THAT IS A PROBLEM THAT DESERVES CONSIDERATION ON ITS OWN MERITS, AND OUR 1975 PARA PAPER WILL ADDRESS IT. BUT IF IT IS UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT POSITION THAT THERE IS NO SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP, OR EVEN THAT IN SUCH A CASE AS THIS LIBERIA GETS ONLY STANDARD TREATMENT AND NO PARTICULAR CONSIDERATION, THEN, BEFORE CARRYING OUT INSTRUCTION OF STATE 082875, I WOULD WANT IT TO BE ABSOLUTELY CLEAR THAT EXPLICIT DECISION ON THAT POINT HAS BEEN MADE. MONROVIA 1703 SPECIFICALLY RAISED QUESTION OF SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP, BUT STATE 082875 DOESN'T SPECIFICALLY ANSWER IT.

5. IF WE WANT TO LEAVE NATURE OF "SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP" UNDEFINED, AS NOW IT IS, WE CAN DO SO BY DECIDING RIGHT NOW TO SUPPORT LIBERIAN MEMBERSHIP ON IMCO COUNCIL. FAILURE SO TO DECIDE, HOWEVER, WILL BE SEEN AS DENYING ANY SUCH RELATIONSHIP AND IS LIKELY TO HAVE IMPLICATIONS FOR OUR BILATERAL RELATIONS FAR BEYOND THE IMMEDIATE ISSUE OF GOL MEMBERSHIP ON IMCO COUNCIL.
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